

Regional Broadband Planning Team Orientation Meeting Minutes

Region 1 – February 1, 2011 (via teleconference)

Region 1 Planning Team (attendees are indicated in **bold**)

Jason Akl, The Lakes Community Health Center

Dan Anderson, Norvado (Cheqtel Communications)

Dave Carter, Chequamegon Communications Cooperative

Cliff Grand, Ashland Area Development Corporation

Ann Harris, Frances L. Simek Memorial Library

Sheldon Johnson, Northwest Regional Planning Commission

Mike Kornmann, UW Extension-Burnett County

William Kuykendall, Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians of Wisconsin

Eric Maki, Midwest Forest Products Company

Richard (Dick) Menzel, EdD, Retiree

Ed Monroe, City of Ashland (former Mayor)

Mary Motiff, Bayfield County Tourism and Recreation

Bobbi Rongstad, Focus on Energy

Sid Sherstad, Siren Telephone Company

Glenn Taylor, Health Industry Consultant

Peter Jahn, PSC

Judy Klug, PSC

Jeff Richter, PSC

Bill Gillis, LinkWISCONSIN

Lisa LaBorde, LinkWISCONSIN

Welcome and introductions – Judy Klug

The following comments were made by the RPT team:

Jason Akl, The Lakes Community Health Center: They are interested in better service patients with diagnostics imaging.

Dan Anderson, Norvado: They are a facilities based company providing broadband. They look forward to providing more broadband with increased speeds. He is here for Dave Carter.

Cliff Grand, Ashland Area Development Corporation: He sits on the Wisconsin Innovation Advisory Committee and is involved in business and education development.

Ann Harris, Frances L. Simek Memorial Library: They have a lot of interest in broadband because of the many patrons that access their PCs because they do not have access at home.

Sheldon Johnson, Northwest Regional Planning Commission: They are 10 county organization. Their emphasis is economic and community development opportunities.

Mike Kornmann, UW Extension-Burnett County: He is the Community Development Agent and has an interest in economic and community development opportunities as well.

William Kuykendall, Lac Courte Oreilles Band: Here to represent tribal interests. They are interested in increasing coverage.

Eric Maki, Midwest Forest Products Company: He serves on the Bayfield Economic Development Board.

Richard (Dick) Menzel, Retiree: He is a retired educator living in Cable, and is on the Cable Chamber Board of Directors. He is interested in enhanced economic development for the region.

Ed Monroe, City of Ashland: Ed was the Mayor of Ashland and now owns a small photography business. Regarding his interest in broadband, he has seen it from its inception ...dial up to now. He is certain that economic development in the community will rely on availability.

Mary Motiff, Bayfield County Tourism and Recreation: She has several interests, including tourism and emergency response. For travelers it is important to extend their stay to keep in touch. She serves on the Bayfield Board.

Bobbi Rongstad, Focus on Energy: The only way to survive in the north woods is if people can work from home. She has worked from home struggling through various technologies that are not consistent. We need a level playing field with the rest of the world.

Sid Sherstad, Siren Telephone Company: He has been with this ISP since 1994. They have been aggressively building FTTH and to the business parks. They can give 10-20 Mb service and are encouraging home offices. They are part of WIN – Wisconsin Fiber Optic Network.

Ground rules – Judy Klug

The Open Meeting and Public Records information guidelines were reviewed. If the individuals from the RPT wish to disseminate information to the rest of the regional planning team, please forward this to Lisa LaBorde (lisa@researchfirst.com) who will share with all in accordance to the above guidelines. At this time, the work is among the team members. There is a form for the Public if they wish to make comments. We will seek public input at a later date.

Overview – Judy Klug

Funding, goals and objectives of the project were reviewed. We want to find out priorities for each region. We are looking for the issues and gaps, and then the money to help implement the plan. The goal is to organize regionally to prioritize and support planning initiatives. We will assess priorities and develop a plan to implement. We are assessing current availability, adoption and use of broadband. From this we will look at developing targeted strategies to fill current gaps in availability.

Wisconsin mapping and planning process – Peter Jahn

Mapping has been going on since the beginning of the year. This can be found online:

<http://wi.linkamericadata.org/>. The data was reported at the census block level, not the street level, but is better than we had before. LinkWISCONSIN also spent time early on doing interviews to get a lay of the land, and created video vignettes on the website.

Wisconsin regions and role of RPTs – Bill Gillis

There are nine regions in the state built around economic development teams. The needs are different for each region. Often leaders in the community work in silos; the RPTs bring these leaders together. The role of this team is to work with ongoing work. Local knowledge is essential. The goal is will be to identify and focus on a specific project that this group can accomplish.

Comments from the RPT based on the priority project examples:

Jason Akl: We have x-rays read by a radiologist in Wausau. With better broadband these could be sent more quickly and they could respond to within 20 minutes.

Bill Gillis: Regarding emergency responders, what would you see in a project?

Mary Motiff: I hate to answer this on my own. Cheqtel has done a tremendous job of working on some of the issues already. We do have multiple providers with CenturyLink and Charter. It is a little bit of a mess to make sense of it. I'm hoping this process will help us make sense of it. I'm not positive of the technology being able to address some of these issues. Data transmission through the wilderness may be a challenge. I'm here looking for answers.

Bill Gillis: There are gaps where the communication system needs to be complete. Filling these gaps is important for public safety and other interests. How can a mix of technologies fill those gaps?

Mary Motiff: Right with a low population density.

Bill Gillis: Another example often raised is "work at home" as being important to the region. Bobbi, what would need to be done to make that happen, not just infrastructure, but training or other needs?

Bobbi Rongstad: For me personally, I need faster internet service. CenturyLink has come leaps and bounds, so now I have adequate service. They tell me they cannot justify putting in more boxes unless there are more people. But there will not be more people in my lifetime to justify these large investments. But we want people to live her. I'm looking for answers.

Bill Gillis: Will, you mention there are gaps on tribal lands. If they were filled, what difference would it make in people's lives?

Will Kuykendall: The tribal members would be able to make use of it if it were expanded to spottier areas. Regarding tourism – second home arrangements – we would encourage more people to stay in the region. Having a technology in rural areas would be a big plus for tourism in the area.

Bill Gillis: We'll spend more time at the face to face meeting on this as the RPT's role is to focus on a project or several projects that have specific objectives.

This is a reusable planning process, a business plan. The deliverable...we want a focused initiative with a business plan behind it. It needs to be doable, effective, fundable and measurable. The goal is to have a focused priority by March or April.

Ed Monroe: These are rural areas. There is such a spread between customers; it will be outrageously expensive to bring broadband to where people are building homes. They are building in the middle of nowhere. To think of bringing fiber to these homes is hard to imagine. We may need to look at wireless, 4G wireless, or digital remotes and then copper for the last mile. To make a business plan for a company that is concerned about cash flow will take creative ideas.

Dick Menzel: I have similar questions regarding the parameters of this effort. Is it just about fiber or also wireless?

Bill Gillis: It can definitely be about wireless, which may fall into the feasible and fundable. We may look at picking low hanging fruit, expanding upon existing projects in the region, serving other needs in the region. In healthcare there are likely investments already going into Electronic Health Records from other federal mandates. This is not about any one technology. The questions you are asking are the right ones. People are not connected, so what tactics can we do to make it happen. With each step we need to ask if it is realistic. This may involve fact finding that we can help with.

Dick Menzel: Do you have a template for the business plan that we are charged with doing?

Clift Grand: There is a project in MI that wants to extend across to MN. Is this part of your effort or vision?

Bill Gillis: We need to learn more about it. The vision is yours. If you see a way to leverage it, maybe you can bring it to us.

Ed Monroe: Being on the top of WI, we are lucky to have 3-4 providers now. The problem I see is making it possible to get those services pushed out into the countryside. The backbone is in place. It is the last 5-10 miles to get where the people are. And this is such a mobile society. They expect it like running water and electricity. They expect to flip their laptop on and get a connection. Those are the low hanging fruit.

Bill Gillis: We are hearing that from all the regions. Your job is to come up with a workable business plan of where we start. This is still a big chunk of wood to carve on. We need to think about the types of

networks already being built. With which geography do we start? Where is our greatest chance of success? At the next meeting will focus on some of these ideas. It is not about technology but solving problems in the region. The timeline was discussed.

Mapping Demonstration – Pete Jahn

Pete shared a view of the maps available online, demonstrating the various aspects. This is built on the Google Maps platform. The overlays show how many providers are in an area. The data is as submitted by providers. Currently it is as of June 2010.

Questions from RPT

Mary Motiff: At some point will we get the word out to our citizens to give their feedback on the map? Will there be a PR? How will you get public involvement?

Pete Jahn: The PUC did a press release, but they may have limited exposure. You know your region. If you think it would be useful for your community to do that, we can help you do that.

Mary Motiff: Is there one already developed that we can use? What is the time line for the public involvement?

Judy Klug: I will look that up and send it to you. The maps are updated every 6 months.

Bill Gillis: The maps are live now, so feedback is welcome now. We will include some summary statistics on the draft plan based on the mapping information. Part of our job is generating background information for you in your plan, including economy, demographics, and adoption data from the consumer survey.

Consumer survey results – Lisa LaBorde

Preliminary results from the Consumer Broadband Survey were reviewed, comparing Region 1 to the state.

Questions from RPT

Mike Kornmann: We need to keep in mind not only who we will serve today, but who we will serve in the future. Through time the demographics of those who live and visit here will grow.

Bill Gillis: One other region's nomination had to do with aging populations having expectations and needs. They had a targeted initiative of awareness and senior awareness.

? : Does this survey reflect those individuals seeking WiFi hotspots outside of libraries, etc.?

Bill Gillis: These are good comments for our follow up survey in a year or so.

?: It would be helpful to know what speed is necessary for what function. What do you need to adequately do various tasks?

Bill Gillis: I have a matrix that probably answers that question. We will provide it.

? : There is such a discrepancy in download and upload speeds. Does the PSC tariff this? What was high speed two years ago is not considered now.

Pete Jahn: The commission has limitations on authority, with the greatest on cellular. They have limited on broadband wireline services.

Lisa LaBorde: Upload speeds are increasing as business and consumer demand increases.

Judy Klug: There is a lot of activity on the federal level.

Pete Jahn: Some medical consultants in other regions were talking in the 10-50 Gb range for high end fiber applications.

? : In 21 categories, region 1 had the lowest Internet use. What does this mean in terms of funding? Is this an issue of demographics?

Pete Jahn: This can represent the highest need.

Bill Gillis: This can be seen as an opportunity to expand demand.

Interactive Broadband Awareness Tool – Bill Gillis

This includes a series of videos on various aspects that broadband may affect, each of which is followed by a brief questionnaire. It is a good tool to use with the community. This may be accessed here:

<http://www.link.wisconsin.gov/lwi/default.aspx?page=52&bhcp=1#Video>.

Priority brainstorming session to be done during a rescheduled face to face session – Judy Klug

Assignments, thank yous and closing comments – Judy Klug

- Please review the website and videos. Send any follow up information to [Lisa LaBorde](#).
- Judy will provide the PR to Mary Motiff.
- Bill Gillis will send a matrix with speed uses and the plan template.
- Cliff Grand will send in the project on Merit ARRA information.
- Lisa LaBorde will send a “Doodle.com” invitation to the Region 1 Planning Team members with date options for the face to face meeting targeted to take place during the first week in March.